

LITTLE COMPTON SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting – March 7, 2011

Wilbur School Commons – 5:30 pm

Members Present: Chairman Tom Alder, Superintendent Kathy Crowley, Principal Jim Gibney, Don Gomez, Ben Gauthier, Mike Steers, John Osborne, Bob Mushen, Beryl Borden, Tom Arkins, Mark Rapp, Micah Shapiro, Margaret Manning, Dorie Freeman, Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux.

Members Absent: Dave MacGregor, BG Shanklin, Jacob Talbot

The Firm of Durkee Brown Architects was in attendance, represented by Doug Brown, Ed Cifune and Ashley Prester

Chairman Tom Alder called the Meeting to Order at 5:35 pm

Approve Minutes from 1/24/2011. Motion by Micah Shapiro, 2nd by Don Gomez, to approve the minutes with the following revisions:

- 1. change Mark Rapp to Mark Page on page two**
- 2. add reference to Tom Arkins memo in meeting minutes approval**

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

- Motion to accept proposed changes to school design originally submitted in Stage II Application, if approved, submit to school committee for consideration.**

Motion by Tom Alder, 2nd by Don Gomez, to accept proposed changes to school design originally submitted in Stage II Application, and if approved, submit to the School Committee for consideration.

Don Gomez, School Committee Chair, provided the Building Committee with a report on his goal for the School Building Project, major deficiencies, status and the remaining due dates of the project. Goal: a functionally sound school, maximize RIDE reimbursement and minimum impact to Little Compton Taxpayers.

Deficiencies: Fire Code, Environmental issues and the flow of the building

Status: RIDE request to establish a single Point of Contact, that being Kathy Crowley, Superintendent of Schools. Kathy teamed with Durkee Brown Architects and interfaced with RIDE in discussions of the Stage II Application. Scott Morrison, Budget Committee Chair, Bob Mushen, Town Council President, Don Gomez and Kathy Crowley met several times with RIDE with the following discussed: Target population, extra classroom, large server, locker and fitness area, mechanical space, care and custody and traffic study.

RIDE stated the following during discussions: that the Stage II Application submission was called “one of the best submitted to RIDE”, there are 6 additional school districts seeking funding this year, must have collaboration and approval from the town, RIDE believes a 47% reimbursement is achievable, final submission required by March 31, 2011 for this year’s appropriation to go through the Board of Regence and Legislative process.

The Stage II Application was revised in accordance with RIDE’s comments: the proposed revisions: 6,000-6500 square feet of reduction in space, project will come in under \$20M, Town Representatives feel the present plan has the best chance of acceptance by Little Compton.

March Due Dates:

- *March 7 Building Committee acceptance of revised plan**
- *March 9 School Committee vote to accept revised plan and submit to the Town Council**
- *March 10 Council vote on “Care and Custody”**
- *TBD Combined Council, School Committee and Budget Committee to brief all members and establish an Asset Protection Plan**
- *March 24 Council Vote on revised application**
- *School Committee will give the Building Committee a new charter to promote and lead the project to a Referendum**

Don Gomez stated that Tom Alder as Chair of the Building Committee and Scott Morrison as Chair of the Budget Committee will

lead the Asset Protection Plan Committee. They are looking for one more person to have a “fair and impartial” look at the plan. The School Committee will focus on establishing a reduced School Building Committee consisting of subcommittees focusing on areas such as an outreach program.

Tom Arkins asked specifics on the plan for establishing an Asset Protection Plan. Since the discussion was not on the agenda, Tom Alder will speak to Tom Arkins outside of this meeting.

Durkee Brown Architects, Doug Brown, Ed Cifune and Ashley Prester, provided the Committee with discussions on some of the specifics for the revised plan:

- *reduce overall square footage**
- *combine science and technology**
- *SpEd and teacher planning spaces moved adjacent to Science**
- *eliminate rear stage expansion, locate Band in current Art room**
- * design stairs that fit within existing space**
- *exercise OT/PT room eliminated, shifting gym service to the East**
- *redesign roof over the Band area for additional height and future 2nd floor expansion**
- *redesign kitchen and server area within reduce space**
- * reduce mechanical room (due to reduced square footage)**
- *relocate lobby bathrooms**
- *greenhouse removed as part of new construction, proposing to be built as an alternative**

Durkee Brown explained that a lot of the specific design decision will be made during the Design Development phase of the project such as, food specifically to be served in the cafeteria will depend on space required. The Schematic Drawing will be revised as decisions are made, but the “not to exceed number” cannot be revised.

Micah Shapiro advised the Committee to be very cautious of reducing the cafeteria too drastically, as the school is the only building in town that could be used as a shelter. Doug Brown stated that the design has met Red Cross standards. Bob Mushen is an advocate of reducing the cafeteria space, and would be surprised to find a written recommendation from the Red Cross on using this area a shelter.

There was discussion on the model of 2 vs. 3 lunch periods and how the difference affects the school day. Kathy Crowley assured the Committee that the present 3 lunch system works, and that RIDE does not require Little Compton to reduce what they are presently doing.

Mike Steers asked for specifics on what RIDE approved and not approved in the submitted Stage II Application as well as the revision for the submitted site plan. Doug Brown stated that RIDE recognizes the inefficiency of renovations vs new construction. Kathy Crowley explained that some of the discussions and suggestions from RIDE were based on State reimbursables, such as elementary and middle

school locker rooms that are not reimbursable. RIDE will require a traffic engineer for the site, but the requirement has been delayed until they see the traffic study that will be required during the Design Development.

Don Gomez stated that the Design Subcommittee had previously recommended that the greenhouse remain, and that since it is not a reimbursable, this would have to be added as an alternative effort.

Ben Gauthier had concerns that not all the deficiencies would be resolved with this revised design. There was discussion on combining Science and Technology and how that would be accomplished. Ashley Prester explained that using moveable tables and rolling WiFi into the room would satisfy requirements. Kathy Crowley explained that the plan is for every child will be assigned a laptop computer, so that sharing should not be an issue. Ben was concerned for escalating risk and contingency estimates and the responsibility of overruns. Ashley explained that the bid is fixed, and there are estimates, but that there is a built in \$1M contingency and \$800,000 construction contingency and that there would be 2 additional opportunities within the stages that track relative escalation. At the present time, there is 0% escalation, although Ashley recognizes that could change over the next few years.

Dorie Freeman was “horrified” that the Band would be relocate adjacent to the 4th grade classrooms. Ashley Prester stated that

there is an allowance for acoustic engineers to address the noise issues from the Band Room. Dorie wants it said, “that this will affect test scores”. Dorie also stated that it breaks her heart that there will be no place for Title One, private phone area or any additional room for future curriculum requirements. Dorie did say that it was a good job by Durkee Brown to design within the reduced square footage, but she has great concerns that there is no give anywhere in this revised plan.

Tom Alder stated that there is room for future expansion by adding a 2nd floor, but he certainly would not want to revisit this possible need after this project has been completed. Ben Gauthier stated that the courtyard is also an area that could be additional space if needed in the future.

Beryl Borden commented that free/reduced lunches are definitely on the increase, and she had concerns for the requirement for additional staff in the cafeteria. Ashley Prester explained that the need would have to be decided upon menu choice and how many daily lunches are served. Kathy Crowley stated that the Food Service contract expires June 2011, which will require this need to be addresses at the time of renegotiating the contract. Beryl also had concerns with the cost of food, which is an unknown at this time, as well as the bubble classroom elimination and whether the School Committee has done anything to recognize the issue. Kathy Crowley explained that 2 classrooms per grade level supports NESDCs enrollment projections.

Beryl wants to make it clear that SpEd had been removed in the past, and she has great concerns for this happening again.

Micah Shapiro stated that he hates going through this process just to end up with a school that is too small for the future. Micah will support additional money to add the put extra classroom even though RIDE would not reimburse for this, as their formula is 2 classrooms per grade.

Kathy Crowley stated that she is concerned that if this project is not approved by the voters, that Little Compton will end up with nothing at all, that the reductions are good and will help with outreach to the public for approval. Kathy had concerns for not having an alarm system within the school, as there will be a huge amount of equipment that will be in the building.

Mike Steers asked about the status of the Care & Custody issue. Bob Mushen said that the Town Council will be discussing this issue at the next meeting, and that Bob would propose any town land being used while school is in session would be within the care and custody of the school, and when school is not in session, the town would be responsible for the care and custody.

Mike Steers also had concerns for the lack of RIDE recommendations and decisions that were made regarding revisions to the building design not disseminated to the Building Committee during the 5 weeks of working on this, and that there should have been dialogue with the Building Committee. Mike said it was very unfortunate that

the revision decisions had been run this way, and was uncomfortable with then the committee being asked to vote tonight after getting info on Friday for a Monday meeting. Tom Alder stated that no opinions of the Building Committee were jeopardized, this was done to streamline revisions and that he was glad that it was done this way.

Tom Arkins stated that the Committee had lost an opportunity, they should have been involved all along, that there has been only one meeting since Christmas with no revision information submitted to the Committee and that maybe the Committee should have a few meetings to discuss these design changes and help the architects along in the process.

Margaret Manning added to Tom Arkins' comments that the Committee still has an opportunity to get it right. Margaret said that if she was voting to spend \$20M on this project, the revised design would not be the design that she would like to see. Margaret stated that the Committee still does not have a cost to fix, cannot compare, and still does not have the numbers to back this up. The Committee should step back as they have not had enough time to "do due diligence".

Don Gomez stated that the school has mold and a recent roof collapse, has had options studied over and over and that "this is a compromise, everybody is successful when everybody leaves mad."

Beryl Borden stated that she understands where Don is coming from, but the recent roof collapse is not a good reason to proceed, the roof should have been fixed 5 yrs ago and the Board of Regence said to “get it right.”

Public Comment:

Joe Quinn asked for clarification of the newest design. Doug Brown clarified that the total is 65, 149 sq ft, that the greenhouse would be an alternate, changing rooms, at 400-500 sq ft, is out with this design.

Doug stated that many specifics will be designed during the Design Development stage of the project such as the reduction of the cafeteria to be determined. Doug stated that 42% reimbursement is a safe low, but RIDE indicated that 47% is more likely.

Kathy Crowley stated that she has concerns that if projects are not approved this year, the State will not be funding any projects the following year.

John Lint had a concern for a 50 year school construction project that is based on only 5 years of projections. John stated that the most important issue is to convince the public that this is the best way to go, the cost figure is important, but convincing the public that absolutely this is the best design for the money is crucial. John asked the Committee what their real concerns are for the revised plan.

Tom Arkins concern was that the Committee keeps reducing and making the project tighter but calls it the “best” design each time, and the project may have been further ahead with more consensus from the Committee. Tom would like for all to be on same side, that would be going in the right direction, that this is not just whining, that to solidify a plan, the entire Committee should have been included. Micah Sapiro is not in favor of all the recent reductions to the original design plan.

There was some discussion on the Asset Protection Plan and how this should be handled as an alternative Plan B to the current plan. Some members were concerned that an alternative should be in place in case the building project is not approved by either the Town Council or the voters. Tom Alder is working on aligning the numbers for the Asset Protection Plan, which consists of a combination of previous plans and new fixes. Don Gomez stated that the School Committee was not in favor of bringing in a 4th party to assess the deficiencies again.

Tom Alder asked for a vote on the motion that is on the floor.

Motion approved 9-6 to accept the proposed changes to the school design originally submitted in the Stage II Application, and if approved, submit the changes to the School Committee for consideration. Tom Alder, Kathy Crowley, Jim Gibney, Don Gomez, Ben Gauthier, John Osborne, Bob Mushen, Mark Rapp, Lynn

Brousseau-Lebreux voting in favor of the motion, and Beryl Borden, Mike Steers, Margaret Manning, Micah Shapiro, Dorie Freeman, and Tom Arkins opposed.

Next SBC Meeting – TBD

Motion to adjourn at 7:38 PM by Micah Shapiro , seconded by Lynn Brousseau-Lebreux. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Rom, Clerk

LCSBC